



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Law and Order Committee receives report regarding
opposition of the Red Barn liquor sales license renewal**

WINDOW ROCK – The Law and Order Committee received a report on Monday, regarding the opposition of the Red Barn liquor store liquor license renewal by the local Navajo community residing in and around Sanders, AZ.

Char James, a consultant and leading advocate for the communities opposing the liquor license renewal, said that the initiative aims to prevent the renewal of Red Barn's liquor license sought by owner Gary Allen McDonald, who was recently indicted on manufacturing and distributing methamphetamine drugs.

"I have statistics that show how this liquor establishment has affected the Sanders area and Navajo people," said James. "It has caused homicides, suicides, accidents, and drug use."

James referred to a pending court case in the Apache County Superior Court, in which McDonald is currently facing drug possession, sales of various drugs, and weapons charges.

Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tse Si'ani, Wide Ruins) spoke on behalf of the communities he represents that are affected by the Red Barn liquor sales in the Sanders area.

"We are asking for support from the Navajo Nation to aid us in revoking the liquor license of the owner because the communities have expressed their frustration that the establishment has had in their communities," said Delegate Curley.

Delegate Curley requested the LOC aid in the initiative as far as seeking attorneys, resources, and legislation that would put pressure on Apache County to revoke the liquor license to decrease the negative effects on the surrounding Navajo communities.

"There are people dying and suffering, and I believe there is an alliance between the business and political entities in that area, and they continue to do nothing to help the people they sell to," said Delegate Curley.

LOC vice chair Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichii, Steamboat) expressed his support of the initiative and provided insight regarding the potential revocation of the liquor license issue.

“Currently, the Red Barn establishment is on private property and is not in the jurisdiction of the Navajo Nation, so this may pose a problem. However, I believe we need to reach out to the [Apache] County leaders that oversee liquor licenses, especially those who issue them,” said Delegate Shepherd.

In agreement, LOC chair Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau) suggested the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission be included in addressing these issues, in hopes they may aid James’ initiative to revoke Red Barn’s liquor license.

At the end of the discussion, LOC members unanimously expressed their support in regards to the initiative and said they hope it sets a precedent to strengthen future regulation of border town liquor businesses by the state.

LOC voted 4-0 to accept the report.

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